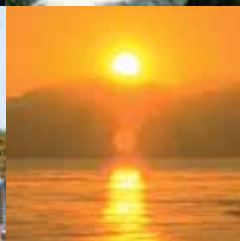


Religious education

Guidance for 14 to 19-year-olds



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Department for Children, Education, Lifelong Learning and Skills



Llywodraeth Cynulliad Cymru
Welsh Assembly Government

Religious education: Guidance for 14 to 19-year-olds

Audience	Head teachers; senior management; teachers; governing bodies; colleges; training providers; local education authorities; SACREs; church diocesan authorities; teachers' unions; national bodies in Wales with an interest in religious education.
Overview	This guidance supports the implementation of the <i>National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales</i> . The document provides guidance on the relevance and benefit of skills and knowledge that young people might acquire through religious education 14–19 and contains case studies of the possible delivery models. The guidance should not be viewed or delivered in isolation, but should be planned in relation to Learning Pathways and the wider curriculum offered at this phase of education.
Action required	To review 14 to 19 provision of religious education and further raise standards in order to support implementation of Learning Pathways, enrich a range of qualifications and provide a method of implementing the Welsh Assembly Government's cross-cutting themes.
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Additional copies	Can be obtained from: Tel: 0845 603 1108 (English medium) 0870 242 3206 (Welsh medium) Fax: 01767 375920 e-mail: dcells1@prolog.uk.com or by visiting the Welsh Assembly Government's website www.wales.gov.uk/educationandskills
Related documents	<i>National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales; Skills framework for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales; Making the most of learning: Implementing the revised curriculum; Ensuring consistency in teacher assessment: Guidance for Key Stages 2 and 3</i> (Welsh Assembly Government, 2008)

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Introduction

Religious education 14–19 provides exciting opportunities for young people to engage with relevant, contemporary and challenging questions that impact on all of our lives: questions about spirituality, meaning and purpose, equality and diversity, authority, global citizenship and sustainability.

Religious education informs learners about the major world religions in order to provide a theological, philosophical and ethical basis for reflection and response that shows both compassion and respect. It helps young people to be more informed about the traditions, practices and values of religious adherents in our society and in cultures across the globe; thus encouraging better understanding and greater community cohesion.

This new guidance demonstrates how religious education can successfully motivate and engage young people in the twenty-first century, in a flexible way to help support implementation of the Learning Core in schools. The Learning Core identifies the skills, knowledge, understanding, values and experiences that all learners need to prepare them for further learning, employment and personal fulfilment within our bilingual and diverse society.

The document provides a range of implementation models by means of innovative case studies showing how parts of the Learning Core and statutory religious education can be combined to complement one another. The case studies are drawn from a variety of schools across Wales. These case studies, if used in a variety of combinations, can be used to meet the legal requirement to provide religious education for 14 to 19-year-olds.

The value of religious education 14–19

The value of religious education as part of the world of work and lifelong learning



I fi, un o werthoedd mwyaf addysg grefyddol yw'r ffaith trwy ddysgu a deall am grefyddau gwahanol y byd, daw dealltwriaeth a goddefgarwch a all ond elwa cyd fyw a'i cyd-ddyn.

To me one of the greatest values of religious education is that learning about and understanding different religions of the world will lead to the understanding and tolerance that can only benefit the process of living together with our fellow men.

Matthew Rhys – Actor

Working for the public service broadcaster it is essential that all programming is representative of the community as a whole and not just certain sections of it. The religious education lessons I attended at school have made me aware of the great spectrum of religious groups.

BBC broadcast journalist



Religious education has never been more relevant. As Britain becomes more ethnically diverse, more rich in culture, and more varied in religious perspectives, the more we see social problems caused by ignorance and intolerance. Religious education... has a chance of tackling these problems, by equipping young people with an understanding and acceptance of different races and religions. It is important that the opinions of the next generation are not left to form solely from what they read in the British tabloid press.

Teacher



As a midwife it is so important to be able to listen to clients when they undergo life changing events, such as childbirth. Religious education ...teaches the virtues of patience, understanding and kindness, which are required to do this work well. The Golden Rule is as relevant in hospital as it is anywhere on the planet.

Midwife

As a police officer, knowledge of religion has been beneficial in helping me to assess the needs of the different individuals I meet in my working environment. In a multi-cultural society it is essential that an organisation like the police is fully appreciative of different beliefs and their associated customs. My sixth form religious education lessons have helped me enormously.

Police officer



Maths, physics and chemistry will help young people understand the world around them. Religious education... will help them understand the people with which they must share it. Adopting a diversity approach will be the key to this awareness.

Youth justice officer

RE is important because we live in an increasingly diverse society, which young people, now and in generations to come, need to learn to celebrate, not 'tolerate'. Ignorance breeds fear, and instilling the young with an understanding of other cultures and religions is the only way to break down the social barriers which cause such unnecessary rifts, and even conflicts between people of all ages in Britain today.

Charity worker



The benefits of religious education 14–19



Engaging young adults in the twenty-first century

Religious education:



Enriches

It is important to teach religious education to young people in school because it teaches people about the ideas and viewpoints of those who adhere to other religions and this means that they will have an insight into other religions and a respect for them. Moreover, teaching young people religious education teaches us about morals and values and how to respect others. Without religions and commandments the world will be in utter chaos.

Stimulates

Yes, we should do religious education in Year 12 because it keeps you aware of what is happening in the world and stops you from thinking there is no point in life. Also I like having discussions on things that we find important, and visiting speakers to tell us how their lives have been changed by their religion.



Excites

I get excited when we have class discussions about big questions like why are we here; why we have responsibility to care for others and the planet; why there is evil in the world. Our teacher always adds a new dimension to our discussions and challenges our thinking.

Engages

Teaching about other religions and their reasons for living their lives in a different way teaches us to respect other people's ideas and live alongside those with different standpoints. By studying the two sides of arguments, working with employers and colleagues in the future will be easier and more peaceful.





Inspires

I am inspired when I hear about people who have sacrificed themselves in some way to help other people. I am inspired by people who remain hopeful when faced with terrible suffering. Religious education allows me to ask big questions and the answers usually make me think deeply about life. I think religious education inspires young minds.

Explores

Studying religious education has helped me think about the world in which we live. It seems a much bigger place than it did when I was in Year 11! I've had opportunity to study the views and opinions of people from a range of cultures. The religious education conferences have introduced me to issues which affect society and have helped me think about ways I can contribute to society and make a difference to others. Religious education has helped me become more respectful towards others. I now realise that people have different opinions to me for good reasons.



Expresses

Religious education gives us an understanding of those from other religions, and this is essential in our society today. It is a means of avoiding racial arguments and uniting people into a single community without judging them.

Informs

In the sixth form religious education lessons we learn about other religious beliefs so that when travelling to other countries, their cultures will be easier to understand and we will be able to show respect to other religions for their beliefs. Speakers from other religions are helpful. Religious education helps us in practical ways too, like knowing how to deal with certain incidents in our lives like arranging weddings and funerals.





Motivates

Religious education is important in schools because it gives us an understanding of day-to-day matters from the point of view of different people of different religions. The subject helps us to understand how to behave, how to treat people and how to help people. By studying religious education I have learned many things which inspire me. This will help me to live life in the way which I feel is right, namely the Christian way. The subject gives me an understanding and also gives me new ideas which help me and my work generally. In future the subject could give me many opportunities to show my full understanding and it will also open many doors for me.

Prepares

Yes, religious education is important to those in the sixth form because we are on the brink of leaving school and becoming adults, yet we do not feel prepared for the world and there is no other subject in school that teaches us how to cope. I like having speakers come in to talk to us about how they dealt with things like drug abuse. And religious education is the only subject where we don't have coursework and essays to do!



Challenges and provokes

As much as we can tell other people about our experience, and show films and pictures, the true feelings and meaning cannot be portrayed. The only way these can be understood is if others participate. It is worth the time and effort... A special thanks goes to my religious education teacher for getting us interested in third world issues and helping with the fundraising for Uganda. I owe a lot to you!

Develops

Taking religious studies has helped me achieve high academic standards. I thought the study of religion would be interesting – and it has been – but it has also helped me to develop my research skills and my ability to present and communicate my work. I have also found that I have become much better at analysing other people's opinions and attitudes.

Ensuring high-quality provision of religious education 14–19

Religious education is a statutory requirement for 14 to 19-year-old learners and must be implemented as required by the locally agreed syllabus. The *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* provides guidance on the skills and range of religious education at this phase and identifies what is considered to be quality religious education.

At Key Stage 4 and Post-16, religious education stimulates learners to engage with fundamental questions and issues that relate to their individual needs, meet the demands of the modern world and motivate and challenge their own and others' thinking, thus building on the skills, knowledge and understanding acquired in the previous key stages. Through active participation and involvement, challenging debate and in-depth investigations of religion and religious/non-religious ideas evident in their locality in Wales, in Britain and globally, learners should use and apply their knowledge to present theories and create hypotheses, thus stimulating deeper and more challenging questions. An in-depth and extensive knowledge and understanding of religion and religious ideas will foster cultural sensitivity and respect, the valuing of diversity, greater social cohesion and responsibility locally, nationally and globally. Religious education crystallizes spiritual and moral development, and can stimulate expressive personal responses when learners discover a wide range of world views and values beyond the mundane and material, and when they become illuminated by newly understood connections or awareness. Through their exploration learners should begin to understand that conclusions drawn regarding fundamental and personal questions are partial, inconclusive and open to different interpretations.

National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales – page 13

The National exemplar framework provides programmes of study for 14 to 19-year-old learners which identify how the three interrelated core skills of:

- engaging with fundamental religious and human questions
- exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)
- expressing personal responses

can be combined to provide stimulating and motivational religious education.

The Range, as set out in the RE framework, identifies the opportunities and contexts within which young people can apply the religious education skills they are developing over the four year period of this phase of education, and by combining the skills and range learners will be engaged in experiences that are both relevant and valuable.

Learners at this phase of their education are developing transferable skills that they can apply in their future lifelong learning experiences. In addition to meeting the requirements of the RE framework, therefore, the approaches identified in the case studies on pages 16 to 70 relate closely to Learning Pathways 14–19 and provide opportunities for learners to develop all of the Key Skills (such as Communication, ICT, Application of Number, Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem Solving). The case studies also demonstrate how learners can be introduced to ideas and challenges that might confront them in their career choices and their future experiences of the world of work.

Schools should, therefore, see the provision of religious education 14–19 not merely as a learner's entitlement but also as an opportunity for a range of innovative timetabling possibilities which can enhance learners' general educational experiences and achievement. The delivery models on pages 16 to 70 not only suggest ways in which the basic legal requirements for religious education can be provided, but also how other elements of the curriculum can be enhanced and supplemented through explicit religious education provision. The religious education skills and range provided in RE lessons can, for example, add an extra dimension to other curriculum areas by increasing insight, knowledge and discernment. This extra dimension could influence successes in external awards, vocational aspirations, extra-curricular interests and commitments, general awareness of issues relating to social cohesion and equality and general motivation.

It is important that religious education is not seen as just an opportunity to chat about significant contemporary events and issues without a clear purpose. Religious education should instead provide an open forum and context within which learners can fully engage with the issues and challenge uninformed preconceptions. They should be given opportunities to explore the theological, philosophical and ethical wisdom of the past and present as a basis on which to develop their own informed viewpoints.

The case studies exemplify the type of activities which could be used to implement quality religious education 14–19. They are in no way exhaustive. The range of models used, the suggested content and approaches are innovative and challenging, but only show a small fraction of the potential that religious education has for enriching the educational experiences of young people.

Religious education and its contribution to Learning Pathways 14–19

Learning Pathways 14–19 provides a major opportunity for managers in all learning situations to make provision that is better suited to the needs of individual young people and the demands of the modern world.

Within Learning Pathways, the Learning Core identifies the skills, knowledge, understanding, values and experiences that all learners need to prepare them for further learning, employment and personal fulfilment so they can contribute to our bilingual and diverse society, whatever Learning Pathway they choose.

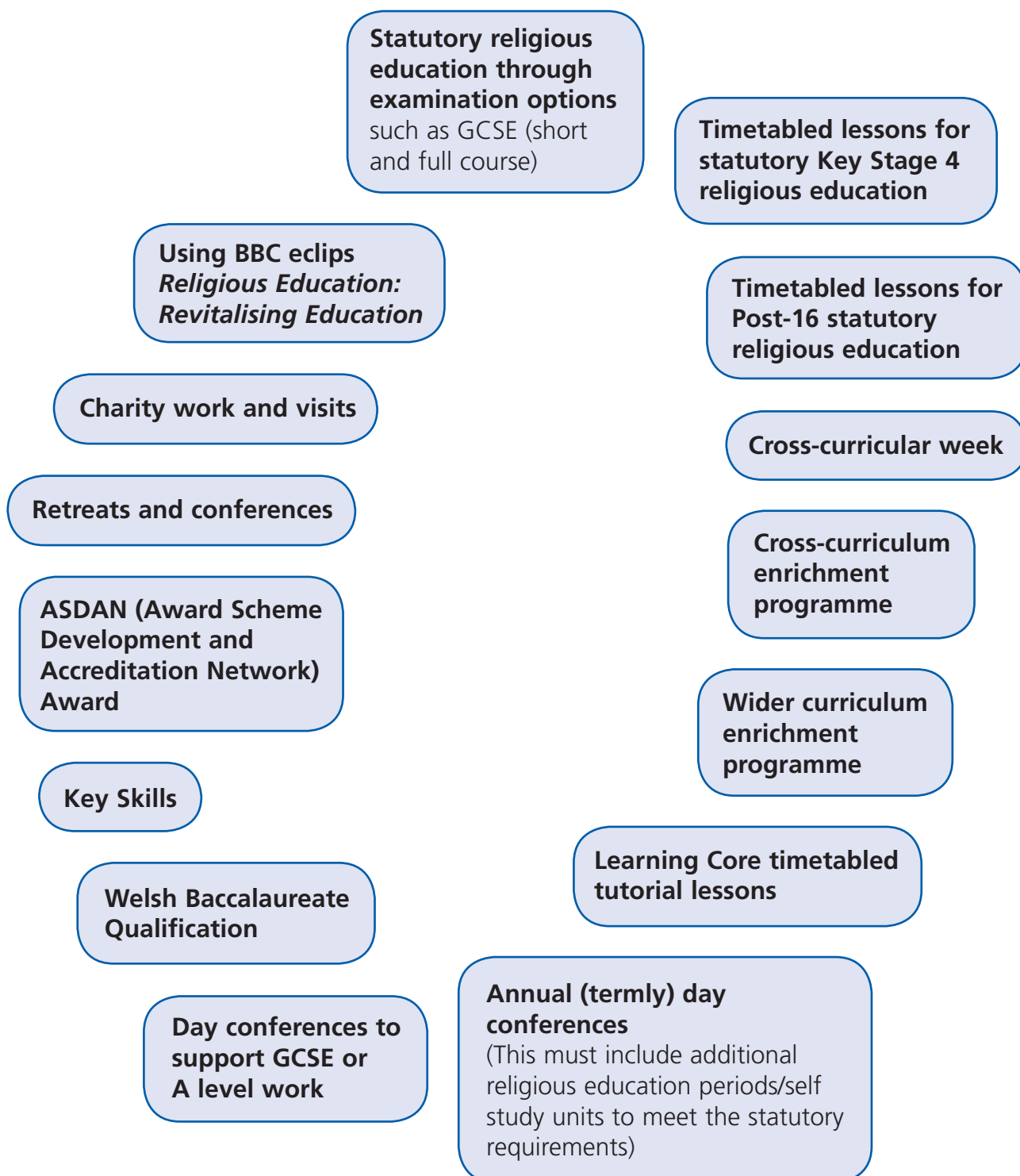
Learners aged 14 to 19 will have Learning Pathways that include programmes from the statutory requirements which include religious education. In developing the programmes of study for 14 to 19-year-olds in the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*, great care was taken to ensure that work required in religious education would complement Learning Pathways requirements.

Learning Pathways 14–19	Statutory religious education provision can contribute to the Learning Core:
Key Skills	by using statutory religious education lessons to develop and assess Key Skills: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• informally through general implementation of the skills and range identified in the <i>National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales</i> (Examples to be found in each of the case studies)• formally in the case studies relating to Key Skills qualifications (page 55) and the Welsh Baccalaureate (page 49).
Welsh language skills	through Welsh medium/bilingual religious education lessons, and by incorporating more practical aspects of religious education into the experiences of Welsh learners (for examples of case studies from Welsh medium or bilingual schools, see pages 19, 28, 36, 45, 47, 49 and 69).
Other work-related skills	by providing elements of the statutory religious education course that focus specifically on vocational matters and skills relevant to the workplace (pages 22 and 31).

Curriculum Cymreig/Wales, Europe and the World	by introducing learners to issues of equality, diversity, justice and global citizenship (pages 17, 28, 31, 36, 38, 41, 45 and 66).
Personal, social, sustainability and health matters	by introducing learners to challenges that might impact on their daily lives and personal relationships and ways in which religion can help build community and responsibility for the world (Examples are to be found in each of the case studies).
Careers education/guidance	by providing elements of the statutory religious education course that might influence their choice of career, and offering skills relevant to the workplace (pages 22 and 31).
Attitudes and values	by introducing learners to a range of challenging ideas, so that they can become well informed, open to new possibilities and discerning and respectful. (Examples are to be found in each of the case studies).
Work-focused experience	by providing opportunities to explore the skills, values and attitudes necessary for the world of work. (Examples are to be found in each of the case studies).
Community participation	by providing opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • to become involved in local activities, e.g. through fundraising (pages 28, 36, 61, 64 and 66) • through formal participation organised by the school (pages 28, 36, 61, 64 and 66).
Cultural/sporting/aesthetic/creative experiences	by providing opportunities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • explore the cultural aspect of religion locally and globally and its impact on society and community cohesion • appreciate the meaning and symbolism conveyed through works of art, ritual, food, dance, etc. • use their creativity to express meaning and the more spiritual/intangible dimensions of life (pages 26, 28, 61, 64 and 66).

Note: Many of the examples provided might cover more than one element of the Learning Core.

Possible delivery models for providing religious education 14–19



The delivery models identified could be used for Key Stage 4 or Post-16 learners. Best practice will combine a range of the above in order to fulfil the legal requirement to provide religious education for 14 to 19-year-olds.



Case studies exemplifying a range of delivery models

Delivery model – Statutory religious education through examination options

The religious studies GCSE, short and full courses, provide a flexible method of delivering accreditation specifically to 14 to 16-year-old learners, but also to 16 to 19-year-old learners if the 'top up' short course were offered.

In order to meet legal requirements, the locally agreed syllabus should clearly identify what type of course is required for 14 to 19-year-old learners. If they recommend the option of formal accreditation for the course of study then the agreed syllabus should clearly identify the awarding body and the examination specification that may be used.

Below are some examples of innovative approaches to learning and teaching that can enhance skills development and enrich learners' learning.

Example 1 | Crime and punishment

This school provides the GCSE short course as their statutory religious education for the whole of the 14–16 cohort in formally timetabled religious education lessons.

Fundamental questions:

- What are the religious beliefs regarding punishment and forgiveness?
- What are society's views on punishment and forgiveness?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian, Muslim and Buddhist perspectives on punishment and forgiveness.

Personal response:

- What challenges do we face today in relation to justice, injustice, guilt, remorse, good and evil?

As part of the study of the capital punishment element of the GCSE short course, learners explore the religious and human attitudes to punishment and forgiveness from Christian, Muslim and Buddhist perspectives. As part of their study they are presented with challenging questions and case studies.

The issue of capital punishment is explored and a class poll is held to determine the learners' opinions. To challenge learners' perspectives they are given case studies of i) prisoners who have received the death penalty, but are later found to be innocent ii) prisoners who after many years in prison repent and try to make amends for past evils, and iii) victims or their families who have forgiven the perpetrators of the crime.

On the basis of these case studies and their knowledge of religious principles, learners debate how religious adherents put their religious principles into action and judge the perpetrator of a crime. Then they identify criteria on which they would make a judgement if they were members of a jury. Having carried out further research in order to gather evidence to support their viewpoints they debate what issues might emerge if a religious adherent was on a jury. Consideration of the law and how it relates to personal religious conviction leads to interesting debate, and consideration of good and evil and the purpose of humanity.

Finally, the teacher introduces a new case study relating to a person whose imprisonment was perceived to be unjust, for example Nelson Mandela. The teacher uses the Philosophy for Children approach¹ so that learners are motivated to ask deeper and more challenging questions about the issue. Learners vote on which question they feel is most significant and then formally debate the question.

The learners are encouraged to respond to the debate by means of an imaginative Powerpoint presentation, so as to demonstrate the challenging religious issues and emotions evoked by justice, injustice, guilt, remorse, good and evil.



Nelson Mandela being released from prison

1. Philosophy for Children or Community of Enquiry requires learners to be given a stimulus (in the form of a photo, article, poetry, prose, etc.) to discuss. Learners ask questions about the stimulus and then debate the merits of the questions they would like to debate. The group, through democratic means, comes to a consensus regarding the most relevant questions and then proceeds to debate the questions formally by using informed and challenging sources and new stimulus materials.

The type of questions raised in the Philosophy for Children activity

- Why do people sometimes suffer in their demand for justice?
- Should religious people be more likely to challenge injustice?
- What will convince people that prejudice and discrimination are bad?
- Are people evil or do they just go along with the crowd without thinking?
- How can people forgive past wrongs?
- How does religious belief impact on forgiveness?

Example 2 | Personal relationships and marriage

This school provides the GCSE short course in formally timetabled religious education lessons.

Fundamental questions:

- What are the religious beliefs regarding relationships and marriage?
- What are society's views on relationships and marriage?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian perspectives on relationships, marriage and divorce.

Personal response:

- An exploration of how and why people are still committed to marriage.

Fulfilling the requirements of the religious studies short course allows use of a range of innovative activities when exploring the subject of personal relationships and marriage. These activities engage learners' imagination and provide them with transferable skills that will enhance future human interaction.

Positive relationships are often based on good communication, trust and respect. Learners explore their own interpretation of the meaning of these words and are often surprised at how many different interpretations there are. By exploring the discrepancies, learners see how easy it is for conflict and misunderstanding to occur. Learners also learn how to participate in mutual listening² which enhances their understanding of communication skills. Learners role-play parts of Jesus' Sermon on the Mount and consider the Christian perspective on relationships, conflict resolution and forgiveness.

A counsellor is invited into school to explain the role of marriage counselling. As she is a committed Christian she explains how her personal religious beliefs have impacted on her work, and she discusses how she has interpreted Jesus' attitude to marriage and divorce. She explains how confidentiality and impartiality are essential to her work.

Learners further investigate the teachings and associated beliefs regarding marriage and divorce and prepare questions to ask a local Anglican priest who visits the school. The priest tells them how he prepares people for marriage by holding classes and describes how he undertakes the wedding ceremony. In groups, learners prepare a range of topics they feel should be discussed in marriage preparation classes, and debate whether professionally organised marriage preparation might help prevent future divorces.

Learners explore the details of the marriage ceremony and investigate how the words and symbolism reflect Christian beliefs. In groups, learners produce a marriage project to explore the beliefs, teachings and practice(s) involved and role play a marriage ceremony which is recorded on video.

2. Mutual listening is epitomised by the idea of listening to understand. In order to do this one allows a person to share feelings and opinions freely and not providing one's own personal interpretation, but rather reiterating what the person says. The depth of understanding shared is immediately enriched and better communication takes place.

An example of work produced by learners

How our group would organise a marriage preparation class

Aim:

- To make the preparation class for marriage interesting and fun.
- To give a chance to meet other couples.
- To learn more about the Christian attitude to marriage.

Why is marriage important to you?

- Ask the couples to share their ideas about marriage and why it is important to them (show them the Powerpoint we made referring to the teachings of Jesus).
- Ask them why they are specifically looking for a Christian wedding service. Discuss the issues.
- Discuss what Christianity means by love, honour and cherish – why are these important?

How to deal with arguments

- Ask each individual to write down their definition of the words love, honour and cherish.
- Compare ideas with the rest of the group.
- Discuss what happens if your partner has a different definition.
- Practice mutual listening skills (mix up the couples so that major disagreements do not take place in the group).

Why marriages go wrong and how to prevent this

- Provide the couples with case studies describing some causes of failed marriages.
- Discuss each one of these in groups; work out what could have been done straight away/much later to resolve the issue.
- Show a Powerpoint on the Christian attitudes to divorce and discuss what support is available for people going through difficulties.

Delivery model – Timetabled religious education lessons

Whilst there is often great demand on the timetable of Key Stage 4 and Post-16 learners, regular timetabled lessons that promote quality religious education can be highly beneficial. Timetabled lessons can meet the statutory requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* and can relate to many of the requirements of *Learning Pathways 14–19*. A carefully planned four year course can engage and motivate learners to investigate and debate questions and issues that are relevant to their lives; it can challenge preconceived ideas or commonly accepted norms; and it can develop transferable skills that often relate directly to career choices and the world of work.

Example 1

This school provides formally timetabled religious education lessons for Post-16 learners and has found this approach to be highly successful.

Fundamental questions:

- What challenges do people face in today's society in relation to business practice and medical responsibility?
- How do religious perspectives relate to these challenges?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christianity provides a range of insights into these challenges in relation to the 'Golden Rule', justice, rights and responsibilities, wealth etc.

Personal response:

- Evaluate influences, both religious and otherwise, on responsibility and ethical decision making.

In a business ethics unit learners identify ethical business practices that have been influenced by religious teachings and beliefs (for example, the business practice of various companies with a Christian foundation and various fair trade organisations). Learners consider the aims of these organisations and the criteria by which their effectiveness is judged. They carry out further investigations into the beliefs, teachings and practices of religions, particularly Christianity, and examine how the underlying religious principles do or should impact on the business world.

Learners explore the moral values expressed in the media through films concerned with big business and money making and consider the importance of ethical principles in the workplace and business practices. Using a range of religious information as a source, groups of learners draw up sets of criteria for ethical business practices and evaluate these criteria in relation to multinational businesses and a local business that uses Christian principles as its basis.

Learners evaluate the business practices of a local Christian-based business



Jesus' teaching	Criteria for ethical business practices	Does the local Christian tea shop meet these criteria?
Good Samaritan (Luke 10: 25–37)	Treat customers with Christian Love (Agape ³). Even strangers/enemies are to be treated with respect and welcomed like a member of the family.	When we visited there was a wonderful atmosphere and we were treated like long lost cousins.
The Prodigal Son (Luke 15: 11–32) where the father kills the fatted calf. This shows that only the best food is appropriate.	Is the quality of the goods excellent and are the goods produced ethically?	Wherever possible, the food and drink are fair trade; other products are healthy, using local resources.
Tithing (Genesis 28:22) and Fair wages (Luke 10:7)	What happens to the profits? Are they used to develop the organisation, pay fair wages and give to a charity or religious organisation?	Any profit is ploughed back into Christian mission.

In relation to a unit on the sanctity of life learners actively engage with religious beliefs, teachings and practice and are asked to consider these in relation to questions such as euthanasia, cloning, organ transplants and IVF. Part of the debate will cover issues such as the meaning and value that is placed on life and whether individuals and/or society have the right to make decisions about who should live or die. In order to draw conclusions they use a range of religious and philosophical perspectives to challenge their thinking.

Learners are then introduced to selected clips from films such as *Extreme Measures* where challenging issues are raised about scientific experimentation and the hypothetical extreme measures that individuals might take for what they believe to be the greater good. Learners build up evidence from various religious and philosophical perspectives, actively debating the issue in order to establish guidelines that protect the individual and society.

3. Agape is the Greek word for Christian Love – showing concern for others even if you don't know (or like) them.

Examples of questions that learners chose to research

- What are the religious and ethical issues involved with stem cell research, transplants using animal organs, etc.?
- What is meant by 'the greater good'?
- Who has the right to decide what is 'the greater good'?
- What is meant by quality of life?
- What are the religious perspectives on the quality and value of life?

Example 2

This school provides formally timetabled religious education lessons for Post-16 learners and has found this approach to be highly successful.

Fundamental questions:

- What is the nature of God and how is God portrayed in the media?
- Is God relevant for the twenty-first century?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- The beliefs, teachings and practices of Christianity provide a basis on which to judge the accuracy or otherwise of the portrayal of God in the contemporary media.

Personal response:

- Appreciate, respect, empathise with and evaluate the viewpoints of others so that they can develop their own reasoned conclusions.

Within their timetabled lessons this school explores topics that relate to a range of issues, and questions that relate to contemporary society. One of the popular themes to be considered at Post-16 is the nature of God. At this phase of education learners can engage with and challenge the subtleties of popular culture and the nuances behind films that contain religious imagery. Films that use religious themes as a source of humour might be considered disrespectful, but they can also be a stimulus to investigate and debate the reality of the beliefs, teachings and practices of religion and how these come to be distorted or enhanced by popular culture.

As a starting point, learners spend time exploring Christian ideas of God as shown in scripture and the person of Jesus. They do this by exploring the beliefs, teachings and practices to inform their thinking. From this firm knowledge base they move on to debate the symbolism relating to concepts conveyed in works of art or in popular culture, for example God as powerful creator as depicted on the ceiling of the Sistine Chapel in Rome; the unrealistic picture of God as portrayed as a cheerful Santa figure in the film *Bruce Almighty*; the down to earth, fun loving image of God in the film *Dogma* where religion is materialistic and is diverted from its high moral and spiritual values, or the image of God as represented in twentieth century feminist theology.

Learners explore the reality of Christian theology (as expressed in the beliefs, teachings and practice) and compare it with the trivial imagery that is often created by the media, asking how uninformed people might become more media literate and discerning. Learners explore the motives of the producers and the way in which religious adherents (for example Christians) might respond to these inaccurate representations of the nature of God. Learners might also explore how other religions might respond.

In order to consider the fundamental question of whether God is relevant in the twenty-first century learners carry out investigative research and present a paper to their peers.

An example of work in which a learner expresses opinions

Arguments some people might give for the relevance of God in the twenty-first century:

- The majority of people in the world believe in God or a higher power, whether Christian, Jew or agnostic. Atheists are a huge minority.
- 'The mind orders all things' – therefore, just because we as humans find it difficult to think beyond empirical realities, it doesn't mean other things or beings can't exist.
- It is claimed that science has slowly disproved God and his relevance, when in fact many of its key figures later pledged their belief in God.
- Darwin's theory of evolution is just that... a theory and not scientific proof.
- Why can't there be theistic evolution? God could have planned evolution and planned the Big Bang due to his omnipotence.
- God is not a static Deity, but the associated universal principles still remain applicable today - 'thou shalt not kill'.
- It is possible for God to exist and remain relevant in an evil world because:
 - natural evil is necessary for the existence of life; without renewal of the earth we would all perish
 - moral evil lies within us because we have free will to make decisions
 - suffering can actually cause the strengthening of faith, even if this can't be seen in the short term.

Delivery model – Cross-curricular week

Many schools favour the suspension of timetabled lessons to provide stimulating and engaging experiences that are not always possible in day-to-day school life. These supplementary activities can enhance a range of disciplines and demonstrate their interrelationships. They can also provide opportunities for more diverse creative and social activities that can engender community cohesion and involvement.

Because religious education deals with a range of diverse and interesting subject matter, it can act as an excellent means of implementing positive cross-curricular activity.

This secondary school uses statutory religious education as the focus of its cross-curricular week held in the summer term.

Fundamental questions:

- What are the challenges that face people in society today?
- How do religious perspectives relate to these challenges, particularly suffering, medicine, conflict and justice?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian and two other religious perspectives on suffering, medicine, conflict and justice (the most popular topics chosen).

Personal response:

- What challenges do we face today in relation to suffering, morality, peace, justice and equality?

As a successful means of preparing Year 10 learners for their accreditation for statutory religious education through the GCSE short course, this secondary school undertakes an annual cross-curricular week. For the whole week, traditional timetabled lessons are suspended and learners are given the opportunity to carry out active learning through the medium of religious education.

Nine groups of 20 to 25 learners are given the list of topics from the WJEC's short course specification and through a democratic process choose a thought-provoking topic and associated charity for their group to research and study. On this occasion the most popular

topics were suffering, medicine, conflict and justice. By the end of the week each group are required to give a presentation of their work and organise fund-raising activities for their charity (to be held in school during the following week).

Despite each group being allocated a teacher to work with them for the week, learners immediately become independent learners and take on appropriate roles and responsibilities in order to plan, problem solve, negotiate and delegate.

The week is carefully timetabled so that the learners are engaged in a variety of activities each day, ranging from lessons on interpreting statistics and formal letter writing to questioning guest speakers and contacting local charities and businesses. A range of appropriate resources (text books, information sheets, articles and access to intra/internet sites) are made available for learners to research the beliefs, teachings and practices of religions and apply their findings to the fundamental questions that are being raised.

The presentations prepared by learners demonstrate maturity and sensitivity and are shared with the rest of Year 10 at the end of the week. The following week Year 10 learners follow up their presentations by holding an innovative fund-raising day for the charities they have studied.

Examples of learners working on cross-curricular activities





Task 3 – Investigation Task

Read pages 37-44 of the book *Buddhism for AS students* by Wendy Dossett

Please answer the question from the introduction –

1. Why do Buddhists not use the term reincarnation?
 - they understand that the reality is the belief that there is no permanent or constant self (anatta). Although Buddhists believe in a link between cause and effect (Karma) as is shown clearly by the Dhammapada, they do not believe that there is complete continuity between one life and the next.
2. Buddhists prefer to use the term rebirth.
 They do not believe that a permanent soul exists forever.
3. Buddhists believe that one life is caused by another exactly as a flame from one candle causes another flame. Both flames are not the same but the first flame causes the second flame. Therefore the person in one life is a continuation of the person in the next life but is nevertheless different.
4. No – just, power of Karma, there is no creator God

Delivery model – Cross-curriculum enrichment programme

Statutory religious education 14–19 in addition to having value as a subject in its own right can also enrich other areas of the curriculum. In relation to traditional subjects on the curriculum such as English literature, history and art and design, an appreciation of religion provides a wealth of knowledge and understanding that enables learners to respond to questions of meaning. The core skills in the RE framework provide young people with an open-ended challenge to search for meaning and to apply religious insights where appropriate. Thus, for example when exploring the play *Dr Faustus* by Christopher Marlow, *Paradise Lost* by John Milton or the *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker learners can apply their knowledge of religion, spirituality, the concept of God, understanding of good and evil, etc. to improve their understanding of the texts.

Similarly, the insight that religion offers to vocational studies is invaluable because it provides an in-depth knowledge and understanding of the religious beliefs, teachings and practices of individual religions, and these influence the culture and values of indigenous communities across the world. The moral and spiritual dimensions raise questions about our values and the impact (both positive and negative) that we potentially have within the realm of travel and tourism, health and social care, etc.

There is potential, therefore, to use timetabled statutory religious education lessons to fulfil the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*, but also, where appropriate, to develop an enrichment program that complements other elements of the curriculum and develops transferable skills for careers and the world of work, and for lifelong learning. The examples overleaf could be incorporated into such a programme.

Example 1 | Eco/ethical tourism

Year 12 learners in this school identify their needs and requirements when on holiday. They define ethical tourism and eco tourism and consider how they could become better ethical/eco tourists.

Fundamental questions:

- Why should we care for the natural world and living things?
- Why should we show responsibility and respect towards other people?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Exploring a range of religious perspectives (for example Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism, Judaism and Islam) on responsibility, values, global citizenship, sustainability, etc.

Personal response:

- Evaluate on what basis individuals make decisions about their lives.

By using knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, teachings and practice of the religions studied previously, plus additional information sheets, learners carry out an in-depth risk assessment in relation to the religious sensitivities of countries they might visit, for example Nepal, India or Israel. As potential visitors to these countries, they carry out research and prepare group presentations identifying important issues and sensitivities regarding modesty, food, traditions, customs, behaviour, etc. and consider how their insight might challenge/help define ethical tourism.

In order to develop an insight into religious viewpoints about the natural world and living things, learners are asked to sort a selection of teachings from holy books and other religious sources in order to identify and compare viewpoints within and across religions. On the basis of their findings they create criteria on which religions might judge eco/ethical tourism.

In groups, learners are given photographs/case studies of eco tourism taking place and are asked to assess these against the religious criteria they have developed. The photographs show the production of manufactured goods using natural processes, for example

chemical separation procedures, rope making and sand dredging by hand. But, additional information identifies that the people live in abject poverty with poor working conditions and inadvertently might be negatively impacting on the environment, for example the chemical factory has no filtration systems to avoid pollution, and use of sand in an enormous building programme inadvertently causes soil erosion.

Having studied statistics for religious commitment internationally and considered the impact religious adherents might have if they became more committed to preserving the natural world and living things, learners design and plan the implementation of an advertising campaign to capture the imagination of religious adherents.

Examples of the type of photos that might be used to stimulate debate



Example 2 | Religion and food

Using the new BBC eclip *Religious Education: Revitalising Education* DVD as a stimulus, Year 12 learners were introduced to a cooking competition where a group of competitors ignore the religious and cultural food rules of their customers with disastrous results. Having actively explored the issues raised in the DVD, learners are given a teacher-led presentation and interactive work on religious food and dietary laws. In groups, they work to develop a suitable menu for a religious celebration and plan its implementation.

The food technology department worked with the groups and provided a cultural food tasting session where the reasons for religious food and dietary laws were further investigated. Exploration of the religious beliefs and teachings relating to food laws raised issues of farming practices, animal welfare and genetically modified foods. These issues were actively debated and were supplemented with presentations from an animal welfare organisation and organisations that work for justice and equality for workers in the third world. These presentations raised more general ethical issues about the natural world and living things within each religion.

The challenges raised during the debate allowed learners to create a presentation for an appropriate audience, showing how (for committed religious adherents) food may not only be about taste or cost, but about belief.

The potential of this course is significant in that it informs learners generally about people in Wales, Europe and the World, but it can also enrich other aspects of the curriculum. For example, the food technology department could create a similar cooking competition with learners creating the food and being also judged on its religious/cultural appropriateness using criteria designed in the religious education lessons. The work on ethical farming, etc. could be extended to explore globalisation and carbon footprints and create cross-curricular activities that link with the geography and business departments. To raise awareness and promote community cohesion, learners could put on a religious/cultural awareness day where religious and cultural foods, dance and music could be shared and promoted.

Example taken from BBC eclip *Religious Education: Revitalising Education*



Delivery model – Wider curriculum enrichment programme

To supplement regular religious education sessions in weekly tutorial periods the school runs a curriculum enrichment programme. Throughout the year the religious education sessions are supplemented by community awareness activities with an on-going commitment to deliver 'meals on wheels' for the local senior citizens and to carry out regular fund-raising activities, such as coffee mornings for Christian Aid⁴, a children's hospice, etc. In addition, after AS level examinations a full day a week is set aside for five weeks in order to support enrichment activities. Some of the hour long periods relate directly to careers and the world of work, PSE and religious education.

Fundamental questions:

- What are the global perspectives on justice and equality?
- What are the economic and practical barriers to achieving justice and equality?
- How can preconceptions and prejudice be challenged?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- What are the religious perspectives regarding justice and equality?
- How can religious prejudice be prevented and how can religions support individual rights and responsibilities?

Personal response:

- What challenges do we face today in relation to justice, equality, prejudice and discrimination?
- What decisions can we make as individuals in order to make a difference?

As part of the religious education contribution to the five week enrichment activities several guest speakers from higher education providers and charities are invited to talk about religious education related topics. A speaker from Christian Aid visits the school to provide input concerning justice, the global economy and fair trade. Following this session different religious perspectives are researched and discussed in groups.

4. Christian Aid website for teachers: www.christianaid.org.uk/learn/ for young people 18 to 25: www.myplatform2.com

Computer simulations are used to interpret statistics in the form of global maps. The Peters Projection⁵ offers an alternative world map where Africa and India are even larger in proportion to Britain than on a traditional map. Economic statistics are used to provide a different map where Britain becomes vast, and poorer countries shrink. Population statistics change the proportions of the map again. During this session not only are learners encouraged to question accepted preconceptions of 'truth' and 'reality' (as conveyed through maps), but also how disproportionate is the spread of wealth. Religions teach that believers need to act in the face of injustice and poverty. Learners are encouraged to carry out research into how religions teach that a just and equitable society can be created. Learners try to problem solve the issues through role play.

A Muslim educationalist visits the school using a very effective Powerpoint which challenges stereotyping. For example, he asks learners "Who wears turbans?" and "Which women wear scarves?". He shows them that turbans are not exclusively worn by Sikhs and that scarves are not exclusive to Muslim women; Muslims in some countries wear turbans and Orthodox Christian women wear scarves in some countries. In groups learners are asked to list (anonymously) five questions or viewpoints about Islam which they would like the speaker to respond to. The questions are put to the speaker by a chairperson who leads the discussion that inevitably ensues. As part of a Key Skills exercise learners carry out further research into Islam.

Examples of the type of questions asked by learners

- Is Allah the same God as that of the Christians and Jews?
- Why do Muslim women wear the hijab?
- What does the word jihad mean?
- What is it like to be a Muslim? Is it difficult to pray five times a day and eat halal food?
- Do you think perceptions of Islam have changed since 9/11?

5. Arno Peters designed a new world map which he claims is a more accurate interpretation of land mass. This can be accessed via the internet.

Delivery model – Learning Core timetabled tutorial lessons

Some schools are making use of tutorial periods to fulfil their statutory obligations for religious education which will be specified in the locally agreed syllabus. In order for this type of approach to be successful, careful planning, resourcing and monitoring are essential. In order to enhance motivation the materials provided must be relevant and stimulating and there must be an explicit, worthwhile outcome which is perceived by learners to be valued by all members of staff.

This school is successfully using timetabled daily tutorial periods to implement statutory religious education and enrich the curriculum.

Fundamental questions:

- What are the challenges that face people in society today?
- How do religious perspectives relate to these challenges?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian and two other religious perspectives on the value and sanctity of life, and suffering.

Personal response:

- What challenges do we face today in relation to equality, morality, spirituality and suffering?

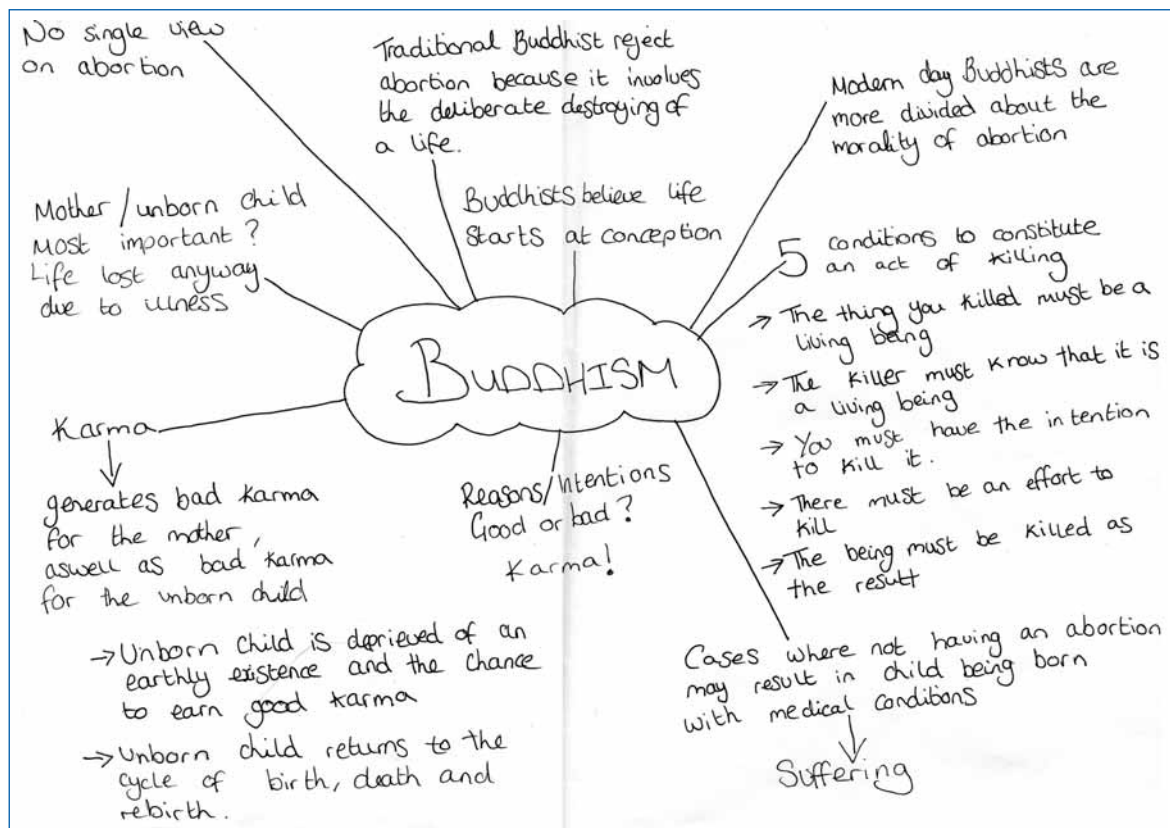
In order to fulfil the requirements of the Learning Core 14–19 and highlight the benefits and importance of religious education Post-16 in this school, it was decided that the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus would be incorporated into sixth form tutorial sessions which are 35 minutes long. A two year programme was developed which included: poverty and the problem of suffering, abortion and the sanctity of life, religious movements and their representatives, racism and religion. Whilst religious education criteria are central to the process, the work undertaken by learners also implements part of the PSE and Key Skills agenda for this age group (including an accredited course).

To promote the skills identified in the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*, information packs concerned with the issues including various religious attitudes were produced to stimulate interest and challenge and support class tutors who deliver the programme.

At the beginning of each topic a specially invited speaker, often representing a religious perspective, for example CAFOD (The Catholic Fund for Overseas Development) and a group promoting awareness of Islam is invited into the school to share their perspective on the issues. This presentation is given to the whole of the sixth form and takes up a whole tutorial session.

Following this introductory session, learners are given the opportunity to engage with the topic by making use of the range of materials available in the prepared information packs. Each self-supported study pack allows groups of learners to examine an aspect of the topic. Several aspects of the topic are covered. Each pack requires learners to engage with a fundamental question through investigation and relevant discussion; to explore the appropriate beliefs, teachings and practice(s) raised by the speaker; to consolidate these through research and to express personal responses in an informed way. Learners usually follow up the investigation and discussion work by communicating their ideas and outcomes through creative verbal and visual presentations.

Example of learners' group work



CHRISTIAN VIEWS ON ABORTION

CHURCH OF ENGLAND

In the modern world the Church of England recognises that abortion is a difficult issue and people have different opinions.

The C of E views on abortion is based on the teachings of God, they have changed their views slightly however as time has gone on.

Today the C of E remains generally opposed to abortion however they recognise that under strictly limited conditions focusing on the mother's circumstances and the quality of life the child would have they occasionally view it as acceptable. However the C of E is always keen to ensure that the abortions are carried out as early as possible. This general position was passed by the Church's governing body.

* HISTORY *

Also bases on this doctrine of Thomas Aquinas' Natural Law Theory.

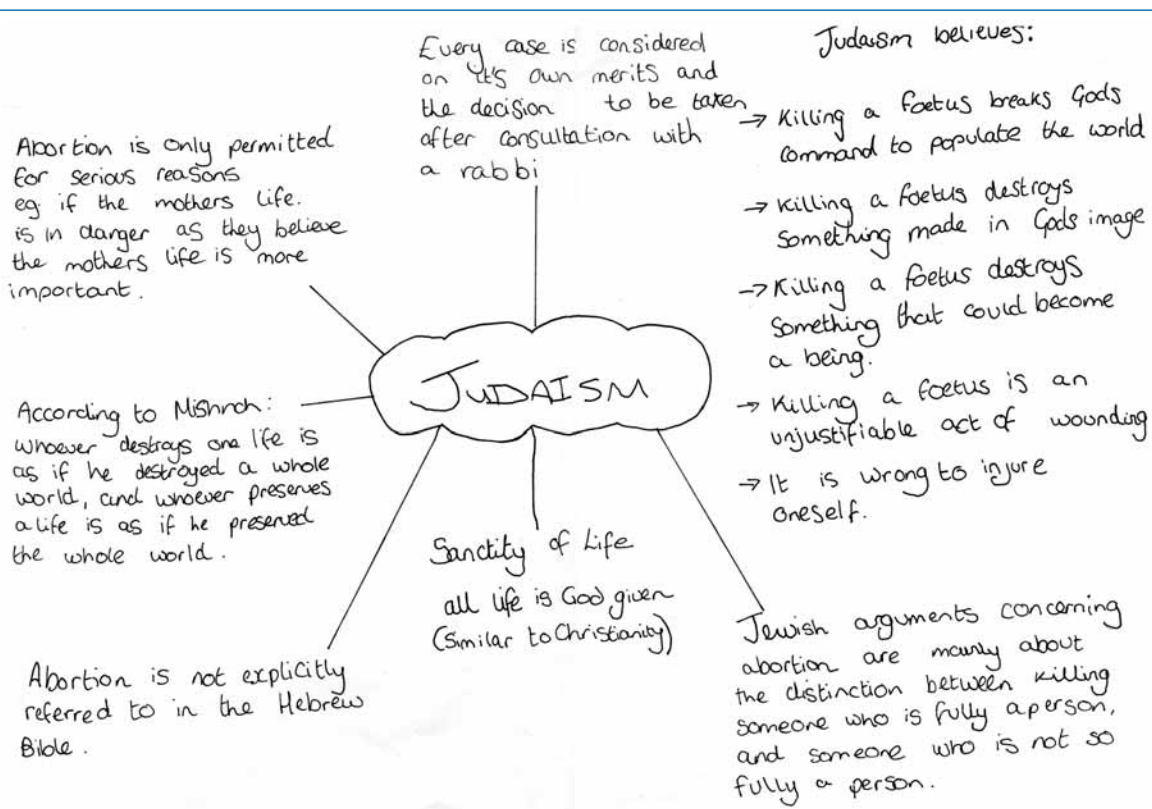
← CURRENT POSITION →

ROMAN CATHOLIC

Catholics believe that human life begins at conception and that deliberately causing an abortion is a grave moral wrong.

This stance on abortion stems from teachings in the Bible specifically the Commandment 'Thou shalt not kill'. There are also several other teachings referring to the sanctity of life. God alone is Lord of life and death and humans have no right to take life. 'I knew you before you were born.'

In 1995 Pope John Paul II wrote a teaching called *Evangelium Vitae* (Gospel of Life) in this he stated the fundamental position of the Church. 'I confirm that the direct and voluntary killing of an innocent human being is always gravely immoral from the moment a unique life begins the features that make us individual are all layed down in the genetic code that comes into existence then?'



Delivery model – Annual day conference

Several schools have decided that a good way to motivate learners at this phase of education is to hold an annual or termly sixth form conference to supplement regular religious education provision. These conferences usually focus on a central theme that relates directly to a fundamental question. Such conferences are designed to involve and enthuse learners by making learning fun and by using active learning and creative and problem-solving activities. Schools often invite external speakers from religious groups or charities, professional performers (involved in religious drama, dance, drumming, etc.) or presenters who access particular resources or methodologies.

Example 1 | Using a commercial external provider

In order to meet the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus, schools often supplement an annual inspirational conference with activities and tasks that are delivered during religious education timetabled lessons, tutorial periods specifically allocated to religious education or the religious education part of a humanities carousel.

Fundamental questions:

- What challenges do politicians face when choosing a course of action?
- How do religious perspectives relate to these challenges?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian and two other religious perspectives provide insights into the challenges faced by political decision makers.

Personal response:

- What political challenges do we face today?
- How much influence can individuals have in the political process?
- What challenges do religious perspectives raise regarding political decision making?

In order to fulfil the statutory requirements for Post-16 religious education, as required by the locally agreed syllabus, the school provides a termly conference and follow-up work to promote religious education. The conferences are often organised by members of staff, but on this occasion the school decided to use an external provider to lead the day from Damaris⁶, who used their ICT package 'President for a Day Experience'.

Several themes were presented during the day, namely, what makes life valuable? Can the world be fair? In what ways (and why) do people suffer? Why are we here? Can religion motivate people to help others? During the course of the day the themes were introduced via interactive DVD clips based on scenarios from a fictitious African country. The leader from Damaris instigated debate and provided information about the religious responses to the issues raised. The scenarios were debated in groups and having come to a decision each group presented their point of view publicly, in a way which replicated the political process used in the House of Commons. All members of the conference voted on the issues raised.

Following the presentations and vote, the presenter showed a new video clip, demonstrating what would happen if the decisions made were taken to their logical conclusion. Debate based on the new scenario was encouraged and new religious materials were provided for the learners to investigate. The process of investigation, analysis and debate increased the challenge, and forced the learners to engage with higher level thinking skills and to recognise the complexity of the issues that emerged.

In order to fulfil the statutory requirement as identified in the agreed syllabus and build on the success of the conference, the teacher provided additional project work for learners.

6. www.damaris.org and www.presidentforaday.org

Sixth formers at the conference



Example of some group work



Selection of learners' comments

- I have learned how I can make a difference regarding poverty.
- We are better off than most people in the world and I think that means that we have responsibility to help others.
- I've learned that debt can be a vicious circle.
- It is difficult to be a president and make decisions.
- I want to be able to stand up for people who can't stand up for themselves.

Example 2

A consortium of teachers in Anglesey and Gwynedd have combined resources to put together a pack that could be used as the basis of an annual sixth form day conference which would enrich their other approaches to statutory Post-16 religious education.

Fundamental questions:

- Is religion a cohesive or divisive force?
- What challenges do religions face?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian and two other religious perspectives on the aspirations and reality of religion.

Personal response:

- What is a religious response to forgiveness?
- What challenges do we face in society today?
- How do we discern the messages conveyed to us through the media?

The fundamental question raised in the pack is 'Religion – a cohesive or divisive force?'. As part of the course learners are given an opportunity to engage through investigation and evaluation with the positive and negative aspects of religion that often make headline news. Learners compare reports and make informed judgements on the reality or sensationalism of the conflict, terrorism, cults, and disrespectful humour that makes headline news.

In order to make valid, informed insights, learners are given an opportunity to explore fully the beliefs, teachings and practices of religions and consider whether the headlines reflect the aspiration and reality of religion. They create a checklist of the ideals of religion and debate why these are sometimes perverted to less than moral ends and who perverts them. They investigate some people who counteract the negative image of religion such as Martin Luther King, Bishop Desmond Tutu, Oscar Romero, Mahatma Ghandi and the Dalai Lama. They consider the religious qualities that set them apart and the way the media has portrayed them. Learners research and present a range of viewpoints about religion and the way it is portrayed in the media and then in groups create an advertising campaign to provide a more realistic picture of religious commitment in this country today.

Learners consider a religious ideal such as forgiveness, and examine a range of challenging case studies which demonstrate how difficult forgiveness can be, and how people find the strength to forgive even heinous crimes. Learners use the case studies to create a presentation giving an insightful, well researched personal response to the issue of forgiveness and the part religion can play in the process.

An example of a photo to stimulate debate about forgiveness taken in the immediate aftermath of the July 7 bombings in London



Delivery model – Annual conference to support examination options

In addition to providing an opportunity for candidates to draw on a range and depth of subject knowledge and understanding, the synoptic unit in Religious Studies A level provides opportunities for young people to develop the wider Key Skills needed for independent learning, improving own performance and problem solving.

This school has instigated an annual day conference in February to supplement timetabled religious education.

Fundamental questions:

- What are the religious attitudes to life, death and life after death?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Investigation of Christian, Buddhist, Muslim and Jewish perspectives in order to explore the fundamental question of the meaning and purpose of life and death.

Personal response:

- How do beliefs about the value of life, and meaning and purpose of death and life after death influence people's attitudes and behaviour with regard to living life to the full?

The synoptic unit requires candidates to carry out individual research and draw together learning from the two year course of study. It therefore demands an innovative approach.

The day began with an outline of the activities that had been planned and a summary of the requirements of the synoptic unit. During the morning session, each group was presented with information on Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, Islam and Ethics and each learner was provided with an information pack containing basic information about each religion, and a bibliography and a list of websites in order for them to carry out their own research.

In the afternoon learners were provided with an outline of the task they were required to research and to give a presentation on the next session in April. Further preparation/planning work was carried out and students took some time to access the library.

In April, during a morning session, learners gave ten minute presentations to their peers on the work they had researched. During this session the teachers provided them with additional materials on religious attitudes to life, death and life after death, so that they could add a new layer of insight to their research and improve their presentations further. The final set of materials prepared by candidates was compiled into a folder and each candidate was given a copy of this folder which further helped them prepare for the synoptic unit.

Example of a learner's imaginary dialogue

Ema: Finally we looked at religious viewpoints: According to Christians the story of the creation in the Bible says that man has been given the task of looking after the world and its creatures. So we have to look after the World for God.

Mathew: Christians believe in Stewardship which means caring for something. Animals belong to God, but we have been asked to care for them temporarily. Therefore according to Christians it is wrong to experiment on animals or be cruel to them.

Ffion: Hinduism: As Hindus believe that every living thing has an atman, or soul, they believe that life is precious and sacred and nothing should be harmed - including animals.

Delivery model – The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

The Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification provides opportunities for candidates to develop their skills in religious education. The skills identified for 14 to 19-year-old learners in the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* relate to many of the skills required for the Welsh Baccalaureate, particularly in relation to the individual investigation. For example, the RE framework states that learners should be given opportunities to:

work alone and with others to create hypotheses, using problem-solving techniques, critical, creative, intuitive thinking and developed metacognition to evaluate a range of preconceptions, possibilities and explanations.

The Range identified in the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* also provides opportunities to develop each of the five core components of the Welsh Baccalaureate: Key Skills; Wales, Europe and the World; Work-Related Education; Personal and Social Education and the Individual Investigation.

Schools could use the potential presented by timetabled statutory religious education lessons to provide a supplementary enrichment programme for learners studying for the Welsh Baccalaureate or could use a selection of the core Welsh Baccalaureate components to fulfil some of the statutory obligations of religious education.

Please note that in the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification statutory religious education is considered to be one of the ‘specified curriculum requirements’.

Example 1 | Religious education as part of the Personal and Social Education element of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

Imaginative timetabling ensures that learners in this school receive their entitlement in religious education and that the skills, knowledge and understanding learned can be used advantageously in different contexts. Other aspects of the award are offered in other lessons on the curriculum.

Fundamental questions:

- What challenges do people face in today's society?
- How do religious perspectives relate to these challenges?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian and two other religious perspectives provide an insight into a range of challenges faced by people in society today.

Personal response:

- Evaluate the influences both religious and otherwise on decision making.

To provide opportunities for candidates to meet their statutory religious education requirement and to face the 'challenges in today's society and help develop relationships within the wider community in which we live' (a requirement for the PSE component) learners play a game that explores beliefs and values. Before the game began, the rules and purpose of the game were explained clearly, i.e. to help learners explore their own beliefs and values. Each player, using a dice, moved around the playing board with the aim to each collect six coloured tokens. When an individual learner landed on a coloured question mark they were asked a question from one of the coloured cards on the board. Having provided a response they led a discussion to debate the appropriateness of the answer given. If the other players were satisfied with the response the player was awarded a token and play continued.

The red cards relate to personality test questions and provide specific feedback on aspects of the personality of the individual player. The blue moral dilemma cards encourage learners to think through various scenarios and explore the moral values of each player. The green belief cards explore learners' own beliefs and the beliefs of people from a range of religions. Wild cards and factual information cards are added to promote more competition and a fun element.

As a result of discussion about values and beliefs evoked by the game, learners are required to write a diary entry. The competencies gained as a result of playing the game and writing the diary entry are compiled as evidence and submitted as part of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. Materials and insights from the game, if supplemented with additional knowledge and understanding of religion, etc. could be developed into a learner's individual investigation.

Example of learners playing the game



A game from Skills Challenge 2 by Terrence Copley and Adrian Brown – adapted and renamed 'Getting to Know me'.

Comments from learners' diaries

'I enjoyed the game because it had some questions that made me think about my beliefs and it let other people who were playing the game with me see how I feel about these questions.'

'The game made me think about things I'd never questioned before...'

'The game made me make decisions about my beliefs and it helped me understand my own actions.'

'The game made me think more deeply than I normally do...'

Example 2 | Religious education as part of the Individual Investigation of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification

In this school the religious education department uses some of their timetabled statutory religious education time to provide opportunities for learners to complete appropriate aspects of the Welsh Baccalaureate Qualification. Other aspects of the award are offered in other lessons within the curriculum.

Fundamental questions:

- What is the significance of religions in Wales today?
- What diversity of religious expression exists in Wales today?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- A range of Christian denominations and two other religious perspectives (for example Hinduism and Buddhism) provide insights into the diversity of religious belief and practice in Wales.

Personal response:

- Evaluate the influences of religion in Wales.

In this school learners are given the opportunity to complete the Welsh Baccalaureate Advanced Diploma (Post-16) and are piloting the Foundation and Intermediate Diploma (Key Stage 4). This qualification requires that learners carry out an individual investigation relating to any topic that interests them, including material for the optional examination subjects. The investigation requires written evidence and an oral presentation supported by visual aids, statistics and accompanying speaker's notes. The learners are given detailed outlines on how to plan and instigate their research and how to present their final findings.

The religious education department, wishing to support their students, helps them to identify a relevant task to investigate and ensures they have sufficient resources. If in addition to accessing the Welsh Baccalaureate Award the individual investigation is to fulfil the requirements of the locally agreed syllabus and of the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* then it must provide more than a sociological study of religion in the United Kingdom. The teacher must, therefore, ensure that as part of the study learners fully engage with a fundamental religious or human question and that the beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions studied are fully taken into consideration and are used as a source to inform hypotheses.

For example, one learner recently carried out a study on whether Christianity was on the decrease in Wales. In order to reach conclusions, the learner drew on a range of non-religious sources in the form of statistics, research findings, etc. which pointed to a more diverse multi-faith Britain. The religious resources used drew on information about the rise of independent evangelical churches, the influx of Orthodox and Catholic Christians from Eastern Europe, and the conversion of some Christians to religions which are perceived to be more meditative. Finally, the learner compared how the beliefs, teachings and practices of different denominations, religions and secular pressures might affect religious commitment in contemporary Wales.

Is Christianity on the decrease in Wales?

The aim of my investigation is to research whether there has been a decrease in the Christian religion in Wales over the past few years, and if it has, what might be the cause of this decrease and what effect it might have on the culture and structure of our society in Wales. The reason I wish to investigate this is because the issue of the centrality of religion in society is something that interests me greatly, and I also feel it will benefit me during my A2 RS course next year. It will also give me the opportunity to do some research into some of the social divisions which might affect the popularity of religion in various counties in Wales.

Delivery model – Key Skills

Religious education can be an excellent medium for promoting and developing Key Skills with learners 14–19. The subject is statutory and, therefore, should already be on the timetable; it has the potential to be motivating, relevant and challenging; it deals with theological and philosophical ideas and ethical questions and so immediately accesses some of the higher level skills; it encourages active learning and debate and encourages learners to consider openly other people's perspectives and viewpoints before drawing their own well-informed conclusions. Religious education could thus be the main means of implementing Key Skills at this phase of education whether informally or formally for an external qualification.

In this school part of the requirements of the Key Skills qualification was provided through religious education and in this way both aspects of the curriculum benefited from this strength of engagement. Other aspects of the award were offered in other lessons on the curriculum.

Fundamental questions:

- Which is more important: the Buddha or his teachings?
- In what ways did Buddha and his teachings impact on the spread of Buddhism?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Investigation into Buddhist insights on this issue.

Personal response:

- Evaluate on what basis individuals make decisions about their lives.
- Do clear principles (as set out in Buddhism) help or hinder people's decision making processes?

Religious Studies was used as a means of providing work for the communication and ICT elements of a Key Skills qualification. In addition, the learners were also able to provide evidence of developing the Key Skills necessary for Improving own Learning and Performance, Working with Others and Problem Solving.

The communication unit provided opportunities for the skills of analysis, debate and evaluation to be developed. The topic chosen for debate was 'Which is more important – the Buddha or his teachings?'

In order for quality debate to take place, preparation was needed. Each learner or group needed to research the viewpoints of the school of Buddhism they had chosen and also a different school (so that they would be able to respond when they were challenged). The teacher designed a set of tasks to help learners prepare some of their materials with the intention that these would eventually feed into the debate. Learners were provided with resource lists, reliable internet sites, computer access, etc.

In preparation for the formal debate, the learners were required to prepare their arguments beforehand and provide handouts for the rest of the class. The debate was recorded and later transcribed by the learners themselves.

To ensure that the portfolio included a range of materials, individual learners were also required to produce a presentation on the spread of Buddhism. The notes, magazine article, handout and Powerpoint slides were printed out as evidence for the portfolio.

For their ICT portfolio, learners were required to create a database, send and receive e-mail, create a mail merge letter and create a spreadsheet. This evidence was included in the portfolio that was submitted to the awarding body. A successful task for ICT needs a realistic and worthwhile context and A level Religious Studies can provide an excellent context.

Example of a learner's ICT record sheets

Subject/Purpose To research the role and significance in Buddhism of Monasticism in the context of the Sangha.

Information obtained	Source of information	How the search was made and the information selected
The religions of countries and population density of countries in Asia. (Section C page 6)	Microsoft Encarta Interactive world Atlas 2000	I have used this Atlas programme many times before as it includes almost anything you could want on a country. I selected to types of maps.
statistics on populations of Buddhists in different countries and information on initiation procedures	http://www.buddhanet.net	Through the search engine 'Mamma' (Screen print 1). The information was set out in a clear, concise and understandable form.
The formation and history of the Sangha.	'A student's approach to world religions - Buddhism' Denise Cush	My RE teacher directed me to this book as the author has a reputation as an excellent writer. I selected information relevant to me.
More information on the formation and history of the Sangha.	'Teach Yourself - world faiths - Buddhism' Clive Kitcher	I have used other 'Teach Yourself' books so I found this book. I selected the information relevant information for my document.
Information on the lifestyle of Tibetan monks	'The Basics of Buddhism' Herbert Ellinger	When I was looking in the RE library, this book had a whole section on the topic I was looking for.
Information on Tibetan 'empowerment' procedures	http://www.khandro.net	I did a refined search using the mamma search engine and downloaded the required information. (Screen prints 16-17)
An image of a 'Torma' (Section A page 7)	http://www.people.wirginia.edu/~hl2m/amita3.html	I typed 'torma' into Yahoo search engine and selected the image I was looking for.

Subject/Purpose To research the role and significance of Buddhism of Monasticism in the context of the Sangha.

Tasks

Section A is the historical background to the sangha so I'll need to find relevant books. Perhaps also relevant websites (depending on the information I can find in books) on the history and formation of the Sangha. Copy out and put the different pieces of researched information together. Type it up, spell and grammar check it. Also get it checked by at least two teachers. Correct the document and Print again.

Also in section A, research the initiation of two different schools of Buddhism (decide which two I can find the most information on) - probably use internet as it'll have deeper detail than books will. Again put information together, type, check it, get two other people to check it. Correct it and print.

Section B will be a newsletter on the lifestyle of Sangha and their role in the community. Will use publisher or powerworks for template. Relevant books and internet sites will need to be found. Then the information will have to be put together logically and checked (spelling and grammar) and proof read by two other people. [Perhaps easier to type in 'word' and cut and pasted into powerworks/publisher].

Section C is the spread of Buddhism. Will need to find out (via books and internet) what first brought Buddhism to the west and why it stayed. Put information together and check it. The other parts of section C are the actual statistics of the spread of Buddhism. From the internet do refined searches for Buddhist statistics. Depending on results draw up a table(s) of how Buddhist adherents compare to other major world religions. From table(s) draw pie charts / bar charts and state what they show. Also find statistics on Buddhist adherents in 'Buddhist countries' (i.e. the percentage of population in that country that follow Buddhism.) Again in section C, create a database (then run a query and make a report) on the Buddhist adherents in the UK - needs to be extensive but two countries in the UK may be


extensive enough for the database, do a refined search for Buddhist directories then download information or just the contact information so I can call / e-mail or write (mail merge) the organisations for information on male and female adherents in their organisation.

Keep all rough work. Screen print procedures. Do a bibliography and section dividers.

Example of a learner's magazine article demonstrating knowledge of the subject and competency in ICT skills

'FOR KARMA SAKE'

Issue 6 Volume 3 4th May 2001




LIFESTYLE OF THE SANGHA TODAY

WELCOME

In the first five Issues, volume 3 of 'FOR KARMA SAKE' (for those who are not avid readers of our newsletter!) we looked at the history of Buddhism, the birth of the Sangha, the scriptures including the rules and the different traditions in Buddhism (Theravada, Zen, Tibetan...) and we have looked at the different ordination procedures. This month we are looking at the life of Sangha members today and their role in the wider community.

cluttered life. When a householder becomes a monk (Bhikkhu), he adopts principles of good bodily action and speech. He leads a wholesome life, observing the moral precepts; he is alert, contented and aware." The structure of the monastic life is determined by the rules set down in Vinaya- the Buddhist's code of ethics. The code's essence was, and is, contained in the ten precepts

circumscription. Hierarchy is important in this tradition too. If a monk was ordained before you, then he is your senior and when addressing him a lower monk should bow and generally show due respect.



THE LIFESTYLE

Despite the discipline of a monk's life, it was seen as being freer than a lay person's life. In a discussion with King Ajatasattu, the Buddha compared secular and monastic existences, "The householder's life is full of hindrances. It is a dusty path...The

THERAVADA SANGHA

Monks that follow the Theravada tradition vow themselves to

DAILY ROUTINE

The routine described below is taken from a British Theravada monastery.
4.00am- The monks get up very early and go to the shrine-room where they chant for some time before an image of the Buddha. They then sit in silent meditation. Dawn-Some time after dawn (as the rules in the Vinaya dictate that the monks are only allowed to eat between dawn and noon), the monks have a simple breakfast of plain rice gruel and tea.

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- 'Welcome'
- 'The Lifestyle'
- Theravada Sangha
- Daily Life

Page 2

- Mahayana Sangha
- The role of the sangha in the community

Page 1

SANGHA LIFESTYLE CONTINUED...

After breakfast chores are done but a few monks will leave on their daily alms round, taking their begging bowls with them. In this monastery food is donated by the laity and prepared in the monasteries kitchen by lay-brothers (anagarika) and laity, so the oriental tradition of an alms round is unnecessary. However, the alms round is maintained out of respect for the tradition and to keep the monks in touch with the local people.

12.00am-The main meal of the day is eaten before noon and then there is a period of rest before the afternoon work-session begins.



Late Afternoon- Tea is taken as well as certain acceptable 'medicines' such as cheese or black chocolate.

7.30pm- The monks go back to the shrine room for more chanting and silent meditation.

MAHAYANA SANGHA

This routine is from the Tibetan tradition describing a day in a Tibetan monastery.

The first strips of light appear over the mountains signalling dawn. The morning puja, (morning prayer) then begins. The lamas, gelongs (monks) and getsuls (pupil monks) gather, in their rust coloured garments, in the lhakang (a sort of prayer room), attached to this is a figure room, usually dominated by a large statue of Buddha. There is no altar present as we would understand it. On the walls, hang thangkas (illustrated scrolls with religious content) to aid in meditation.

The monks adopt the 'lotus position' with crossed legs under them on the low benches that are arranged long

seat, to the left of the central axis of the lhakang. The entire room is dark except the little light that comes in from an opening in the middle of the roof. There are many butter lamps which give sparse light. These butter lamps, together with the many incense sticks, give off an intoxicating smell.



The monks talk together, then suddenly everything becomes still. The rhythm of muffled drums and the scanned texts from the Kangyur, gradually command the observer's attention, even if he/she cannot understand the language. This commanding impression is further intensified by the fact that the rhythmic emphasis and also the pitch of each individual syllable, obey rules which are strictly observed.

After some time, this murmuring increases and cymbals and bells become almost painfully loud. Then, suddenly, the prayers break off and silence falls. Next, butter tea is poured from splendid copper cans into the small wooden bowls that each monk has. The order of pouring is the by rank; a monk ordained before you is a higher rank than you. Before each monk is also a small leather container with roast barley meal in. The barley meal at this point is mixed with the butter tea. This mixture, known as tsampa, is now something like a ritual meal within the framework of the morning sacrifice.

The rhythmic prayers begin again a little later. This time the rhythm becomes more rapid. The noise increases and along-

side the drumming now, shrill shawms and flutes accompany the monks as they pray. This all swells to a symphony which, does not sound very attractive to most ears and the ghyantas join in.

When this happens, we know that 'terrifying deities', the guardians of the teachings of Buddha, are being called upon. The long tubes, like alpine horns, together with their extremely deep tone, sound out dully.



Then it all suddenly breaks off and the resultant silence is almost as painful as the noise. The monks however, leave the lhakang clapping, to go about their daily work.

The role of the Sangha in the community

A great proportion of a monks time is devoted to the laity. As in some countries still, the monks are dependant on the laity for food and all countries are dependant on the laity to provide future monks (monks are celibate after all). In return the monks take part in funerals and other events requiring religious ceremonies. The monks also provide religious and secular education to the new monks, so whether they chose to stay as a monk or leave the monastery, the new monk has had a stepping stone to a better life.

Delivery model – ASDAN award (Award Scheme Development and Accreditation Network)

The ASDAN award is a Universities Award Programme that accredits enrichment activities and sets challenges for young people as part of their Post-16 phase of education. Learners who undertake the award are expected to develop and demonstrate a range of skills by completing certain tasks. The learners choose their own tasks and then provide a portfolio of evidence of the success of the activities they have undertaken. One aspect of the award is 'to increase awareness of the distinctiveness of other countries, cultures, religions or values and their significance to the world scene...' which reflects some of the requirements of the Post-16 programme of study in the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales*. On this occasion, however, this school advised learners to link religious education with the Active Citizenship unit in the specification, which would then be counted as one of four credited modules.

Whilst ASDAN itself is not exclusively focused on religious education, the latter can clearly have a part to play in enriching the work of learners whilst undertaking this award. Timetabled religious education can add a range of perspectives and an added dimension to the award that might be difficult to deliver elsewhere on the curriculum. It can particularly enhance provision of Module 1 (Active Citizenship) and Module 4 (International Relations) by providing knowledge, understanding and transferable skills that help learners to enhance social cohesion and cultural equality and diversity.

This school used part of its statutory religious education lessons to help learners work on relevant aspects of the ASDAN award. Other aspects of the award were offered in other lessons on the curriculum.

Fundamental questions:

- How can communities work together to help people in need?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian perspectives on the Golden Rule, the value and worth of human life and the impact of religion on individuals and society.

Personal response:

- Evaluate the impact of helping others on individuals and on the community.

To support access to the ASDAN award, learners receiving statutory religious education were introduced to various religious beliefs, teachings and practice concerned with the Golden Rule, the value and worth of human life and how religious ideals often impact on the way in which believers lead their lives and create relationships within their local community. The lessons and activities undertaken in religious education went on to identify and explore ways in which learners could put their personal ideas, both religious and otherwise, into action by undertaking charity work to raise money for elderly people in the community.

In addition to formal religious education lessons, learners were given an opportunity to consolidate what they had learned and put it into practice through practical innovative school/community activities. Learners wishing to embark on this award worked at developing the wider Key Skills, such as 'Improving own Learning and Performance', 'Working with Others' and 'Problem Solving', and presenting this evidence in a structured portfolio.

Example of a learner's record sheets and fund-raising activities



Challenge 3 Objectives

- To plan and organise charity fundraising events with other sixth form students
- To raise enough money to hold the annual Christmas OAP party
- To participate in other fundraising events to help benefit local communities

Challenge title: Charity fundraising LOAP Credit rating: 1

Background (Include an explanation as to why you have chosen this challenge, what your particular strengths and weaknesses are in relation to this challenge, what experiences you hope this challenge will offer, what skills or knowledge you hope to gain, how you have negotiated this challenge with your tutor and so on):

I would like to give something back to the community which I have grown up in. I am quite imaginative so will be able to come up with a few quirky ideas for raising the money needed for the Christmas party. Generally, I am quite shy, but hopefully I will be able to overcome this. I hope it'll have a good enjoyable time raising the money. I hope to gain a deeper knowledge of the concept of raising money for charity. I feel it will make me more confident and broaden my personality. I discussed this with my tutor and decided upon a half credit bid to compare with the teaching buddy scheme.

Action steps to be taken (Describe the various stages you foresee in completing this challenge, the short term targets associated with each stage, and indicate the timescale for their completion):

2006

Autumn Term - Organise a Carvery Tournament for years 7 and 8 to raise money.

Winter - The build up to the December OAP Christmas party. Wear a blue wig for the entire party and collect money through sponsorship. Also construct a Christmas tree to be sold to teachers. Assist with the party's organisation.

2007

March - Construct a ladder to be sold for St David's Day making money for next year's party.

(December
After school
evening
raising
money
for
charity)

continued overleaf

Delivery model – Retreats and conferences

There is a range of retreat centres across Wales that focus on the more creative, thoughtful and spiritual dimensions in life. The experience provided by a stay at a retreat centre can release learners from the pressures they face in their daily lives, provide opportunities for them to interact with each other without the technological trappings of our twenty-first century society, and to explore the integral value and purpose of life. Religious education endeavours to provide opportunities and experiences for learners to explore and develop the more reflective, intangible skills within the classroom, but a few days away can provide a more focused means of engaging with nature and other people in a safe, structured environment.

This school used an enrichment programme to supplement statutory religious education lessons.

Fundamental questions:

- What are religious experiences and spirituality, and what are their many facets?
- How does religious experience and spirituality impact on individuals and the community?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian perspectives on religious experience and spirituality, relationship and responses to God, meaning and purpose of life and the impact of religion/religious commitment on individuals, communities and society.

Personal response:

- Reflection on the value of religious, spiritual and moral dimensions to life.

A Roman Catholic school regularly organises whole year, four day retreats for its learners. In Years 14–16 these practical experiences and workshops not only allow learners to explore elements of the religious, moral and spiritual dimensions, but also help learners improve their personal self-esteem and a sense of the school as a social community. The personal and social aspects in particular are enhanced in a number of ways, for example, with learners discussing

religious and human issues openly and sensitively in small groups; working with others to explore creative methods of expressing ideas, i.e. through art, dance or drama; having quiet time and space to share, and think about themselves and others; and learning experiences in pairs where social interaction is fostered. These experiences have been found to be very positive ways of supporting learners' personal and social development whilst also giving them an opportunity to explore their spiritual side.

In addition to this successful activity the school provides several sixth form conferences per year. One of the conferences involves the study and discussion of Catholic teaching on social justice and the outworking of the Christian ethos promoted by the school. As a result of these day courses, learners have become involved in many local community initiatives. For example, they support Samaritan's Purse (Operation Christmas Child Shoe Box Appeal) and the Mr X Appeal (a local charity) which allows the school to become the collection point for charitable giving in the local community. As a result of links with the St Vincent De Paul Society, learners collect Easter eggs which are subsequently delivered to the local women's refuge at a confidential location. As a means of exploring religious social action and commitment, learners have also initiated evenings of entertainment for the local senior citizens where learners perform, organise bingo and raffles and also provide a substantial meal for their guests.

Learners attending one of the retreats



Delivery model – Charity work and visits

Charity work and visits can provide positive ways for learners to demonstrate concern and responsibility through positive action in the local community and globally. They can explore the underlying principles on which various charities are developed and can evaluate why they exist and who they benefit.

Charity work and visits can provide the impetus for learners to find out more about the different beliefs, values and commitments of religions and cultures in Wales, Europe and the World, thus providing a rich and relevant source for their religious education. Through religious education they can explore the religious origins of charity work, how faith and commitment can inspire sacrifice and selflessness and can investigate why religious and non-religious people support the work of charities or find personal ways to help others and aim for a more equitable world.

In this school, statutory religious education lessons provide support for additional enrichment experiences for learners.

Fundamental questions:

- How far can individuals relieve the suffering of others?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christian and two other religious perspectives that provide an insight on the value of caring for others and the importance of active charity work. Specific information on religion in Uganda and how it compares to religion in Britain.

Personal response:

- Evaluate the value of taking action against poverty, from a religious and non religious perspective.

This school has developed a unique approach to integrate religious education and the Learning Pathways 14–19 through community participation and social action. For a number of years learners have been actively raising money for their link school and orphanage in Uganda in conjunction with a Christian relief organisation. Through active fundraising the whole school has played their part in providing textbooks, free milk, a sewing machine and improved educational equipment/facilities. Some sixth form learners are then given the opportunity to visit the schools in Uganda.

The orphanage in Uganda



The religious education department has, over the years, provided learners with essential knowledge and understanding of the beliefs, teachings and practice of religion, their impact on the community and the wider world. The department has developed understanding of third world issues and religious commitment in the face of suffering, and has promoted an awareness of the value of social action, of taking responsibility for individuals and communities, and how religious and non-religious organisations can impact on society at home and abroad.

The school is considering how to strengthen and consolidate the links between the project and the requirement to provide statutory Post-16 RE. This could be done by using timetabled, Post-16 RE lessons to interview speakers, carry out formal debates, participate in active learning opportunities and develop authentic and informed case studies/resources for future students, etc. The aim would be for learners to engage fully with and provide informed responses to the fundamental religious and human questions raised by globalisation, human rights, charity work, fair trade, etc. and develop transferable skills for their future employment or lifelong learning opportunities. With clear guidelines, the individual summaries of the Welsh or Ugandan aspect of the project could be written up and used as evidence for a Key Skills qualification or for the individual study in the Welsh Baccalaureate.



The experience of one of the learners who travelled to Uganda

The trip was organised in conjunction with Christian Relief Uganda, so as well as spending time at the link school, we stayed at Maria's Care primary school and orphanage. Here we busied ourselves sorting out donations, painting walls and playing with the children... We also had several opportunities to venture out of the complex, visiting clinics, maternity wards and local schools and bouncing over horrendous red dirt roads for hours on end to visit remote villages... an amazing experience...

Delivery model – Using BBC eclips *Religious Education: Revitalising Education*

The BBC has collected a range of stimulating materials from their archive and made it available for schools on the eclips website⁷ and DVD. These materials (commissioned by DCELLS) provide an innovative and relevant stimulus for 14 to 19-year-old learners and can be used in formal religious education lessons, conferences or any other setting for statutory religious education. The eclips are accompanied with lesson plans and activity sheets to demonstrate how the *National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* can be implemented at this phase of education.

This school has used eclips as a basis for planning and implementing statutory religious education.

Fundamental questions:

- What challenges do people face in today's society?
- How do religious perspectives relate to these challenges?

Beliefs, teachings and practice(s):

- Christianity, Buddhism, Hinduism and Judaism provide a range of insights into challenges faced by society today.

Personal response:

- Evaluate the influences, both religious and otherwise, on decision making.

As part of formally timetabled lessons for 14–19 RE, this school has used one of the new BBC eclips units for religious education. In six one hour lessons the classes consider what the most relevant values in today's society are and how increased electronic communication affects these values. The class explores the meaning and significance of values such as honesty, faithfulness, trust, integrity and respect, and evaluates which should be most highly esteemed. The learners watch two of the eclips from *Pobol y Cwm*, where honesty, respect and integrity are called into question.

Learners explore and investigate the fundamental values identified through the beliefs, teachings and practice of four principal religions. They consider the values identified in, for example, the Ten

7. www.bbc.co.uk/wales/eclips/

Commandments, Jesus' teaching relating to the Golden Rule, Karma, Dharma, etc. and debate and evaluate the relevance and significance of these values to today's society. They also consider how and why religious adherents commit to these values which are sometimes challenging to uphold.

Learners consider the benefit and concerns raised in articles and news reports about modern technological communication, for example social networking and other websites, mobile phone use, etc. All of these can be used for positive communication but can potentially be used for more disreputable ends.

Using religious and non-religious beliefs and values as sources of insight, learners outline the values/relationships that they would wish to promote, and then set about planning a worthwhile and appealing website.

Each group uses a Powerpoint presentation to explain how their understanding of religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s) influenced their decisions in the creation of the new website, the benefits of the new website in encouraging values and strengthening positive relationships, and identifying how they would encourage use of the website. As part of the presentation there would be opportunities for the rest of the class to comment and make suggestions.

Example taken from BBC eclip*s Religious Education: Revitalising Education* (Pobol y Cwm)



Exemplar case studies chart

The exemplar case studies demonstrate the following requirements:

	Religious Studies GCSE		Timetabled lessons		Cross-curricular week	Cross-curriculum enrichment		Wider curriculum
RE Range – Key Stage 4 and Post-16	1	2	1	2		1	2	
The world								
• the place, purpose and value of life	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓
• the natural world and living things	X	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
Human experience								
• human identity	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓
• meaning and purpose of life	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• belonging	X	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• authority and influence	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	X	✓	✓
• relationships and responsibility	✓	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓
• the journey of life	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X
Search for meaning								
• non-material/spiritual	X	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
• knowledge and experience of the non-material/spiritual	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Please note: during the course of the whole key stage it would be reasonable to expect every aspect of the range to be embraced

Key Skills

• Communication	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• ICT	X	✓	X	X	✓	X	X	✓
• Application of Number	X	X	X	X	✓	✓	X	✓
• Improving own Learning and Performance	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓
• Working with Others	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Problem Solving	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Learning Pathways

• Welsh language skills	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Other work-related skills	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓
• Curriculum Cymreig/Wales, Europe and the World	X	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Personal, social, sustainability and health matters	✓	✓	✓	X	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Careers education/guidance	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	X
• Attitudes and values	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
• Work-focused experience	X	X	✓	X	X	✓	✓	✓
• Community participation	X	X	X	X	✓	X	X	✓
• Cultural/sporting/aesthetic/creative experiences	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	X	X	✓

Learning Core tutorials	Annual conferences		Conferences supporting examinations	Welsh Baccalaureate		Key Skills	ASDAN	Retreats and conferences	Charity work and visits	BBC eclips <i>Religious Education: Revitalising Education</i>
	1	2		1	2					
✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ X	✓ X	X X	X X	X X	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	✓ X
✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	X ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ X X X ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ X ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ X X X	✓ X ✓ X X X	✓ X ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ X ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ X ✓ X X
✓ ✓	X ✓	X ✓	✓ ✓	X X	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	X ✓	✓ ✓	✓ ✓	X X

✓ ✓ X ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ X ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ X X ✓ ✓	✓ X X ✓ ✓	✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓	✓ X X ✓ ✓	✓ X X ✓ ✓	✓ X X X ✓	✓ X X X ✓	✓ ✓ X ✓ ✓
✓ X ✓ X ✓ ✓	✓ X ✓ X ✓ X	✓ X ✓ X X X	✓ X X ✓ X X	✓ X X X X X	✓ X X X X ✓	✓ X X X X ✓	✓ X X X X X	✓ X X X X X	✓ X X X X X	✓ X X X X ✓

Appendix 1 – Religious education at Key Stage 4 and Post-16

Excerpt taken from *The National exemplar framework for religious education for 3 to 19-year-olds in Wales* (page 27)

Learning Pathways 14–19

For learners at Key Stage 4 and Post-16, religious education will be part of each individual's statutory learning pathway. The course of study followed should be designed to encourage both the abilities of young people as learners and their desire to access future learning opportunities. In particular, the course should contribute as widely as possible to the four aspects of learning as identified in the 14–19 Learning Core.

The RE framework provides a Key Stage 4 and Post-16 National Exemplar Programme of Study. The skills at Key Stage 4 and Post-16 are the same, but the range is different.

Key Stage 4

At Key Stage 4, the framework provides an exemplar programme of study that relates to the requirements of current GCSE qualifications, but also provides suggestions for innovative school-based enrichment courses that relate to the 14–19 Learning Core and/or other appropriate qualifications (e.g. Key Skills/Welsh Baccalaureate). Assessment for such studies would either be carried out formally through the procedures adopted by an awarding body or by setting school-specific outcomes guided by the national exemplar level descriptions for religious education.

Post-16

The wide-ranging programme of study for pupils at Post-16 can be implemented in a variety of innovative ways as part of a school enrichment programme. They relate to the 14–19 Learning Core and/or other appropriate qualifications (e.g. Key Skills/Welsh Baccalaureate), allowing schools to meet their statutory obligations for pupils up to the age of 19. Assessment for such studies would either be carried out formally through the procedures adopted by an awarding body or by setting school-specific outcomes guided by the national exemplar level descriptions for religious education.

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills, their knowledge and understanding of Christianity and the other principal religions, and use these to raise and respond to fundamental human and religious questions. This should be carried out through the **interrelationship of the three core skills of the subject**.

- **Engaging with fundamental questions** – fundamental questions are human and religious questions that focus on the search for meaning, significance and value in life. They have a profundity and intensity that underpins any aspect of study in religious education.
- **Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)** – this includes exploring religious stories, sacred texts, lifestyle, rituals and symbolism, which provide insight regarding these fundamental questions and raise further religious and human questions.
- **Expressing personal responses** – this includes relating the issues raised during study to pupils' own experiences and allowing the development of personal responses to, and evaluations of, beliefs, teachings and practice(s) and fundamental questions.

These core skills inform one another and all three should be applied appropriately to the range studied.

Skills for Key Stage 4 and Post-16

Engaging with fundamental questions

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- ask, discuss and respond to fundamental questions raised by their own experiences, the world around them and aspects of religion
- investigate fundamental questions from a variety of informed religious and non-religious sources to evaluate a range of possibilities and begin to draw reasoned conclusions based on the evidence gathered
- work alone and with others to create hypotheses, using problem-solving techniques, critical, creative, intuitive thinking and developed metacognition to evaluate a range of preconceptions, possibilities and explanations
- evaluate and justify arguments and points of view while recognising that the conclusions are only partial, inconclusive and are open to different interpretations.



Exploring religious beliefs, teachings and practice(s)

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- recall, describe, and explain the beliefs, teachings and practices of the religions investigated
- make and investigate the links between beliefs, teachings and practices to demonstrate a coherent understanding of religious ideas concepts
- apply a wide range of religious concepts to present arguments for and against a variety of beliefs, teachings and practices and accurately explain a range of viewpoints held by religious people
- consider evidence on how religion impacts on the lives of individuals, communities and society, evaluating a range of interpretations
- analyse, interpret and evaluate the layers of meaning symbolism within religious stories, rituals, art, dance and music.

Expressing personal responses

Pupils should be given opportunities to:

- communicate religious ideas and concepts using reasoned argument, personal opinions and ideas in a variety of creative ways, *e.g. orally, in writing, and through creative arts*
- evaluate how learning about the varieties of religious/spiritual experience and moral decisions might impact on their own and other people's lives
- appreciate, respect, empathise with and evaluate the viewpoints of others so that they may draw their own reasoned conclusions and develop positive attitudes
- reflect on interpretations of the spiritual side of life
- use a wide range of religious vocabulary and demonstrate a developed understanding of symbolic language
- use ICT and other means to gain access to information, to communicate religious concepts.





Key Stage 4 and Post-16 National Exemplar Programme of Study

Range for accredited/non-accredited statutory RE at Key Stage 4

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills by focussing on the following contexts for study. These should not be regarded as discrete topics but rather as interwoven areas of study that provide opportunities for pupils to engage, explore, and express ideas and responses. During the course of a whole key stage it would be reasonable to expect every aspect of the range to have been embraced.

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop skills through engaging with:


The world

- **the place, purpose and value of life** – the reciprocal influence and impact of religion on relationships, communities and cultures in Wales, Europe and the World, *e.g. the challenges of relationships (human/Divine); the future of community; diversity of culture and religion* 
- **the natural world and living things** – ways in which religion inspires people to take action within the local and global community, *e.g. local, national and global aid agencies; the influence of religion on citizenship; stewardship; sustainability; animal welfare; sanctity of life* 

Human experience

- **human identity** – ways in which human nature and identity is perceived and valued in religion and culture in the twenty-first century, *e.g. human attitudes and values; selfishness and selflessness; fairness, justice and equality*
- **meaning and purpose of life** – issues of truth, meaning, purpose and value in religion, such as good, evil, free will, fate, suffering, innocence, hope, life/death/life after death and issues arising from religious and non-religious interpretations of contemporary events and phenomena, *e.g. political decision making; public expenditure; natural disasters; individual, national and global debt*



- **belonging** – ways in which religion inspires commitment, engagement, dedication, reflection and aspiration, e.g. *parallels between sport and religion; use and abuse of leisure time; expressions of faith through study, action, meditation and worship*
- **authority and influence** – the impact that religion has in the decision making process of individuals and communities in Wales, Europe and the World, e.g. *challenges to religious freedom; freedom of speech/information movement; sacred/secular laws; human/civil rights; conscience, justice, liberation, war, peace; reconciliation* 
- **relationships and responsibility** – the impact that religion has on the personal, social and moral development of oneself and others, e.g. *rules for living; rights and duties; embracing diversity; attitudes towards and use of resources; challenges to religion in the work place/careers choices/vocation; human dignity, equality, integrity, tolerance; responsibility*
- **the journey of life** – ways in which religion influences and challenges, personal and collective identity, e.g. *fashion, sport, leisure time; worship and celebration; upbringing; local community*

Search for meaning

- **non-material/spiritual** – traditional and contemporary expressions of religious experience and spirituality, e.g. *the nature of God; symbolism/imagery; experience of God; reasons for belief in God; faith and doubt*
- **knowledge and experience of the non-material/spiritual** – the strength of religious/spiritual conviction that enables people to dare to be different and to take a stand to instigate positive change, e.g. *relationship with and responses to God; impact of religion/religious commitment on individuals, communities and society; identity/diversity within and across religion.*

Key Stage 4 and Post-16 National Exemplar Programme of Study

Range for accredited/non-accredited statutory RE at Post-16

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop their skills by focussing on the following contexts for study. These should not be regarded as discrete topics but rather as interwoven areas of study that provide opportunities for pupils to engage, explore, and express ideas and responses. During the course of a whole key stage it would be reasonable to expect every aspect of the range to have been embraced.

Pupils should be given opportunities to develop skills through engaging with:

The world

- **the place, purpose and value of life** – ways in which religion emphasises the value and worth of human existence, *e.g. motives, decisions and consequences; exploitation and modern slavery; justification for fair trade/equality/justice*
- **the natural world and living things** – religious justifications and objections to use and abuse of the natural world and living things, *e.g. medical ethics; interpretations of natural law; governance of the world*

Human experience

- **human identity** – questions about religious certainty and truth in contemporary society, *e.g. interpretations of God; reality TV; truth and honesty in the media; hedonism*
- **meaning and purpose of life** – ways in which religious and contemporary values and ideas influence self-worth and perception of others, *e.g. media portrayal of God, religion, morality; media depiction of role models; inspirational figures and celebrities*
- **belonging** – Wales and the global village's implications for religion, *e.g. multicultural society; pluralism; richness and diversity global accessibility; erosion of traditional values; rise of electronic communication and the breakdown of relationships*





- **authority and influence** – ways in which religious and secular authorities relate to the contemporary media and entertainment industries, *e.g. videos and music; sensationalism of violence; trivialisation of sexual behaviour*
- **relationships and responsibility** – the ways in which religion, government and world-wide organisations impact on global harmony/discord, *e.g. responsibilities of the UN; liberation theology; war/peace; democracy/rule of God*
- **the journey of life** – religious interpretations of creation and the purpose of humanity, *e.g. nature versus nurture; interpretations of fate, destiny and salvation.*

Search for meaning

- **non-material/spiritual** – traditional and contemporary definitions and understanding of religious experience and spirituality, *e.g. is religion active or passive?; religious experience through the media; religious and psychological views of conscience/consciousness*
- **knowledge and experience of the non-material/spiritual** – the impact of the non-material/religious/spiritual on individuals, communities and societies and the ways in which this impact is hindered/promoted by secular society, *e.g. portrayal of near-death experiences/miracles in the media; politics; apathy/commitment extremism.*

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Peter Turnley/CORBIS (page 18).

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It is good practice when using commercially produced materials that might cause offence that parents complete a parental permission form.

It is crucial that prior to visiting any website with learners the practitioner visits the website in advance. This should be done to check that the information/material intended for use:

- supports the learning of young people
- is relevant to the work being explored
- is appropriate for the young people.

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